

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 138, 142, 146, 150 and 152, and add new Claims 154 to 158 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, now read as follows:

1. to 137. (Canceled)

138. (Currently amended) An output control apparatus communicating with an ~~operable to communicate with an~~ information processing apparatus via a network and controlling a printer, the output control apparatus comprising:

print counting means for counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

trouble counting means for counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer ~~when a print trouble occurs~~;

determination means for determining whether or not the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches a predetermined value;

specifying ~~transmission control~~ means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value, specifying ~~controlling transmission of trouble data including~~ the trouble count value counted by said trouble counting means until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

transmission control means for controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value specified by said specifying means to the information

processing apparatus via the network whereby ~~such that~~ the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of trouble count value ~~indicating the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by counted until the print count value reaches~~ the predetermined value ~~at said output control apparatus~~; and

initialization means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control means and said initialization means repeatedly perform transmission control and initialization, respectively, whenever said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value.

139. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to claim 138, wherein the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

140. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said transmission control means controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to said output control apparatus at the same time.

141. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said output control apparatus is a digital copier.

142. (Currently amended) A method of communicating by ~~which~~ an output control apparatus ~~is made operable to communicate~~ with an information processing apparatus via a network and controlling a printer, the method of communicating comprising ~~the steps of~~:

a print counting step[[,]] of counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

a trouble counting step[[,]] of counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer ~~when a print trouble occurs~~;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches a predetermined value;

a specifying step of, in the case of determination ~~if in the determination step it is determined~~ that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, specifying ~~controlling transmission of trouble data including~~ the trouble count value counted in said trouble counting step until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

a transmission control step of controlling transmission of trouble data including ~~to the information processing apparatus such that the information processing apparatus recognizes~~ the trouble count value specified in said specifying step to the information processing apparatus via the network whereby the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of ~~indicating~~ the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by ~~counted until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus~~; and

an initialization step of, if in said determination step it is determined that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting means reaches the predetermined value.

143. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 142, wherein said initialization step initializes the print count value and the trouble count value if the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

144. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 142, wherein said transmission control step controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to the output control apparatus at the same time.

145. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 142, wherein the output control apparatus is a digital copier.

146. (Currently amended) A memory medium, storing computer-executable code for ~~causing execution of~~ a method of communicating by which an output control apparatus ~~is made operable to communicate~~ with an information processing apparatus via a network and controlling a printer, the ~~the~~ [[said]] method of communicating comprising ~~the steps of:~~

a print counting step[[,]] of counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

a trouble counting step[[,]] of counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer ~~when a print trouble occurs~~;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches a predetermined value;

a specifying step of, in the case of determination if in the determination step ~~it is determined~~ that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, specifying ~~controlling transmission of trouble data including~~ the trouble count value counted in said trouble counting step until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

a transmission control step of controlling transmission of trouble data ~~including to the information processing apparatus such that the information processing apparatus recognizes~~ the trouble count value specified in said specifying step to the information processing apparatus via the network whereby the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of ~~indicating~~ the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by ~~counted until the print count value reaches~~ the predetermined value ~~at said output control apparatus~~; and

an initialization step of, if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever said determination step determines that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value.

147. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to claim 146, wherein said initialization step initializes the print count value and the trouble count value if the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

148. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein said transmission control step controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to the output control apparatus at the same time.

149. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein the output control apparatus is a digital copier.

150. (Currently amended) An output control system comprising at least one information processing apparatus and a plurality of output control apparatuses each ~~operable to communicating~~ communicate with said at least one information processing apparatus and controlling a printer,

wherein each of said plurality of output control apparatuses comprises:

print counting means for counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

trouble counting means for counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer ~~when a print trouble occurs;~~

determination means for determining whether or not the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches a predetermined value;

specifying ~~transmission control~~ means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print update means reaches the predetermined value, specifying ~~controlling transmission of trouble data~~ including the trouble count value counted by said trouble counting means until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

transmission control means for controlling transmission of trouble data including ~~to a predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus such that the predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus recognizes~~ the trouble count value specified by said specifying means to the information processing apparatus via the network whereby the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of ~~indicating~~ the number of print troubles counted until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus; and

initialization means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein each of said at least one information processing apparatus comprises:

reception means for receiving the trouble data from said  
transmission means, and  
display control means for making a comparison between the trouble  
data of said plurality of output control apparatuses received by said reception  
means, and for controlling a display device to display a result of the comparison,  
and  
wherein said transmission control means and said initialization means are  
repeatedly performed whenever said determination means determines that the print count  
value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value.

151. (Previously presented) A system according to Claim 150, wherein  
each of said at least one information processing apparatus further comprises selection  
means for selecting one of said plurality of output control apparatuses to be used in  
response to the comparison made by said display control means.

152. (Currently amended) An output control method, for use in a system  
comprising at least one information processing apparatus and a plurality of output control  
apparatuses communicating ~~each operable to communicate~~ with said at least one  
information processing apparatus and controlling a printer, comprising the steps of:

performing by at least one of said plurality of output control apparatuses:

a print counting step of counting a print count value indicating a  
number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the  
printer;



a trouble counting step of counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer ~~when a print trouble occurs;~~

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches a predetermined value;

a ~~specifying transmission control~~ step, in which, if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, specifying the trouble count value counted by said trouble counting means until the print count value reaches the predetermined value; ~~controlling~~

a transmission control step of controlling transmission of trouble data is transmitted, including the trouble count value specified in said specifying step ~~counted until the print count value reaches the predetermined value~~ to a predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus via the network whereby ~~such that~~ the predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus recognizes a ratio of the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by the predetermined value ~~the trouble count value indicating the number of troubles counted until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said output control apparatus;~~ and

an initialization step of, if said determination step determines that the print count value counted by said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value,

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever said determination step determines that the print count value counted by said print counting step reaches the predetermined value; and  
at the information processing apparatus:

a reception step of receiving the trouble data transmitted in said transmission step; and

a display control step of making a comparison between the trouble data of the plurality of output control apparatuses received in said reception step, and controlling a display device to display a result of the comparison.

153. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 152, further comprising the step of, at said information processing apparatus, selecting one of the plurality of output control apparatuses to be used in response to the comparison made in said display control step.

154. (New) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

155. (New) An output control method according to Claim 142, wherein said transmission control step controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the

information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

156. (New) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein said transmission control step controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

157. (New) An output control system according to Claim 150, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

158. (New) An output control method according to Claim 152, wherein said transmission control step controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.